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March 8, 2016

**Hearing Testimony submitted in Support for Substitute SB 422**

"An Act Concerning Residential Water Rates, Public Drinking Water Supply  
Emergencies and the Sellers of Bottled Water"

Hearing scheduled for March 11<sup>th</sup>

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Senator Catherine Osten, Co-Chair

Representative Philip Miller, Co-Chair

Dear Members of the Committee,

Water is our most precious resource and, as such, additional regulatory controls that prioritize our water supply for use by Connecticut residents are necessary. **We therefore respectfully urge the committee to support Senator Beth Bye's Substitute SB 422.**

The notion that we have "plenty of water" to give away is antiquated and needs to change. We can no longer think of water as a private cache, available to sell in extraordinarily large volumes to water bottling corporations that then ship our water out of state.

Water is a public resource that should belong to all of us. As such, citizens should have a strong say in how it is managed and protected. As it stands now, it appears that the MDC, and not the people or their elected officials, has the final say in what happens to our precious water supply.

This is a bill for Connecticut's future and I urge you to support it. However, there are aspects of the bill that we feel could benefit from additional amendment. Specifically, the bill should:

- **Protect residents, not water bottlers during a drought.** If the DPH declares a Drought Advisory, the production of bottled water in CT should stop.
- **Rescind water rate discounts for water bottlers.** Water bottlers extract large amounts of our municipal water and spring water, fill the environment with plastic pollution, and profit while citizens are conserving and paying more. Such willful wastefulness should not be encouraged.
- **Rescind the *Special Sewer Service Charge* discount for water bottlers (now known as the *Clean Water Project Charge*).** CT ratepayers have paid for years to build infrastructure for clean water; corporations who contributed nothing to this effort and who do not have the best interests of Connecticut in mind should not be afforded large discounts.
- **The MDC (Metropolitan District Commission) should reestablish a citizens advisory committee.** This would ensure that the public has a say in MDC decisions that potentially affect all of us.

I thank you for your time in reviewing these comments.

Sincerely,

*Jane Zande*  
*Jeff Smith*